

Sent: Fri, 29 Oct 2010 15:32:02 -0400
From: "Chang, Benjamin" <benjamin_chang@nss.eop.gov>
To: [REDACTED] 'Rhodes, Benjamin J.' <benjamin_j._rhodes@nss.eop.gov>
Cc: "Vietor, Tommy" <thomas_f._vietor@who.eop.gov>
Subject: RE: AMBINDER: Power Failure Shuts Down Squadron Of ICBMs

FYI, From Heather H. and friends:



Isolated ICBM Glitch Has Nothing To Do With New START

10/29/10

Last weekend a computer glitch at F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming caused a temporary communication disruption with 50 of our nation's intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM). With the investigation of the command and control system well under way, Air Force Vice-Chief Gen. Carrol "Howie" Chandler said yesterday that, "The safety of the weapon system was never in doubt." Gen. Chandler further stressed that the incident does not signal "a degradation of the system." With 1,968 strategic operational warheads in our arsenal, the computer glitch disrupted communication with about 3% of our operational nuclear force for approximately 45 minutes. This isolated event deserves careful scrutiny, but at no time was the credibility of our nation's deterrent undermined.

Unfortunately, certain politicians have politicized this glitch by attempting to use it to justify their opposition to the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START). New START has the "unanimous support of America's military leadership" and the Senate will likely consider it when it returns to work after the elections. This important treaty has deep support from military and national security leaders from both sides of the aisle, and the computer glitch at F.E. Warren in no way compromised that support. New START remains an urgent national security priority as it provides for strategic stability between the world's two largest nuclear powers. Quick ratification of this treaty will allow U.S. inspectors to once again monitor and inspect Russia's nuclear arsenal, thereby strengthening American national security.

ICBM glitch had "no real bearing on the capabilities of our nuclear forces" and should not be used as an excuse to block New START. According to the Air Force Times, "The recent loss of communications with 50 nuclear missiles does not show the aging atomic weapon arsenal has become unstable, Air Force Vice Chief Gen. Carrol 'Howie' Chandler said Thursday. 'The safety of the weapon system was never in doubt,' Chandler said in Washington. He added that the incident does not signal 'a degradation of the system,' largely built in the 1960s." As CNN reported, "The disruption lasted longer than an hour, but the military maintains that because of redundant systems, at no time was the Air Force unable to monitor, communicate with or, if need be, launch the intercontinental ballistic missiles on the president's command. Chandler applauded the men and women tasked with trouble-shooting the problem but said the Air Force is going to take a 'very hard look' at command and control." The Arms Control Association further explained that, "The significance of the Wyoming incident has been overblown, and its link to New START is non-existent. 'Based on our understanding of the situation right now, as the Air Force has described it, it was not a significant disruption; it was a technical problem,' Defense Department spokesman Col. Dave Lapan told the Associated Press."

Former Deputy Commander in Chief and Chief of Staff of U.S. Strategic Command, Lt. Gen. Dirk Jameson, USAF (Ret.), once again reiterated his strong support for New START and stressed that the computer glitch at F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming was "nothing to be overly concerned about." Prior to his STRATCOM assignment, Gen. Jameson commanded the 14,500 men and women of the U.S. 20th Air Force, and was responsible for all U.S. Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles, seven major subordinate units, operational training, testing, security and readiness. On a media conference call convened by the bipartisan American Security Project, Gen. Jameson emphasized that this interruption had "no real bearing on the capabilities of our nuclear forces to carry out their deterrent mission." Gen. Jameson further warned against doing "something foolish like not ratifying the New START Treaty because of this isolated event." Gen. Jameson continued, "I represent a group of retired admirals and generals who, on a nonpartisan basis, have investigated the New START Treaty and believe that it is in our country's vital interest to see that this treaty is ratified." [Air Force Times, [10/28/10](#). CNN, [10/28/10](#). ACA, [10/28/10](#). Lt. Gen. Jameson, via Democracy Arsenal, [10/28/10](#)]

Bipartisan support from our nation's top military and national security leaders remains strong for ratification of New START. Over the past several months there has been an outpouring of bipartisan support for ratification of New START. Secretary of Defense Gates confidently stated, "The New START Treaty has the unanimous support of America's military leadership - to include the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, all of the service chiefs, and the commander of the U.S. Strategic Command, the organization responsible for our strategic nuclear deterrent." Seven former commanders of the United States Strategic Command also voiced their support saying, "We strongly endorse its early ratification and entry into force." And as Senator Kerry (D-MA), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, outlined in a letter to his fellow committee members: "In our effort to provide a wide range of views, we heard from high-ranking members of the Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush 41, Clinton, and Bush 43 administrations. We also heard from the directors of the nation's three nuclear weapons laboratories, and received written testimony from the man

who oversaw them for President George W. Bush. We had a closed hearing with high-ranking intelligence officials. And we questioned the Treaty's negotiators on multiple occasions, in open and closed sessions... Overwhelmingly, these witnesses supported timely ratification of the New START Treaty." California Republican Governor Arnold

Schwarzenegger was more direct and to the point, saying to the U.S.-Russia Business Council Oct. 21: "There are those in America that are trying to flex their muscles and pretend they're ballsy by saying, 'we've got to keep those nuclear weapons,' [They think] that's very rugged, when you say that. It's not rugged at all. It's an idiot that says that. It's stupid to say that." [Secretary Gates, 5/13/10. STRATCOM Letter, 7/14/10. Senator John Kerry, 8/3/10. Arnold Schwarzenegger, via The Cable, 10/28/10]

Quick ratification of New START is a national security priority, as it will allow American inspectors to return to Russia to monitor its nuclear arsenal. It has been 328 days and counting since America lost the ability to inspect Russian nuclear weapons. As Undersecretary of State for Arms Control Ellen Tauscher and James Miller, the principal deputy undersecretary of defense for policy, wrote in Politico, "If the Senate approves the treaty - a two-thirds vote is required - we will be able to regain and improve upon our ability to verify what Russia is doing with its nuclear arsenal. Without New START, our knowledge of Russia's nuclear forces is likely to erode and the risks of misunderstandings and miscalculations will grow. Worst-case assumptions are then likely to fuel military planning in both countries, increasing costs and decreasing trust."

Assistant Secretary of State for Verification, Compliance and Implementation and chief U.S. negotiator for the New START accord, Rose Gottemoeller, explained in Arms Control Today that, "There is no substitute for on-site inspections. They provide not only the 'boots on the ground' presence to confirm Russian data declarations, thus helping to verify compliance with treaty obligations, but also insights into Russian strategic forces located at those facilities. Simply put, the United States is more secure and safer when our country is able to gain a better understanding of the Russian strategic arsenal." The ranking Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Sen. Lugar (R-IN) explained in August that, "The problem of the breakdown of our verification, which lapsed December 5, is very serious and impacts our national security," Lugar said. Former Senators Sam Nunn (D-GA) and John Warner (R-VA) wrote that, "The treaty's provisions for data exchange and on-site inspection is likely to provide valuable information on Russian nuclear capabilities that we would not have otherwise. It is also likely to increase transparency and confidence on both sides - improving predictability, stability and security...The American public can be confident that this treaty enhances our national security." [Ellen Tauscher and James Miller, 9/16/10. Rose Gottemoeller, via Arms Control Today, 9/10. Sen. Lugar, 8/3/10. Sam Nunn and John Warner, 9/16/10]

What We're Reading

Iran is ready to discuss its disputed nuclear program with the six world powers.

The government has spent \$80.1 billion on intelligence activities over the past 12 months, disclosing for the first time not only the amount spent by civilian intelligence agencies but

also by the military.

Somali militants linked to al Qaeda briefly asserted control over Mogadishu's most strategic road, escalating their efforts to overthrow the U.S.-backed transitional government in a region where Islamic radicalism is gaining strength.

A NATO offensive to secure the Taliban's birthplace of Kandahar is putting pressure on militants, but genuine success will not be clear until next June.

The Obama administration is allowing American military aid to continue to four countries that use child soldiers, by issuing a waiver to the Child Soldiers Prevention Act.

Mexican President Felipe Calderon believes the U.S. is not doing enough to stop the drug wars happening in his country.

The 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, will formally invite the U.S. and Russia to join their annual East Asian Summit in the Vietnamese capital.

Unidentified gunmen ambushed a convoy of five police vehicles in the western Mexico state of Jalisco, killing nine officers and leaving one missing.

President Obama will visit one of the world's largest mosques and deliver a major address to the people of Indonesia when he visits that island nation next month, in a long-delayed trip that will mix childhood reflections with outreach to the Muslim world.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton declared that the United States was not bent on containing China, even if its relationship with Beijing was complicated.

Commentary of the Day

Jim Hoagland hopes that the world's economic powers use the coming G-20 summit to prepare people for the tough decisions that will have to be made soon.

Roger Cohen outlines how we are entering a critical moment in the Israel-Palestine negotiations and argues that President Obama must tease out what territory Israel expects to retain in a final agreement before progress can move forward.

Yula Tymoshenko argues that the authoritarian tendencies that are beginning to surface in the Ukraine should be taken serious by Europe.

The National Security Network's (NSN) mission is to revitalize America's national security policy, and bring cohesion and strategic focus to the progressive national security community. NSN works with a broad network of experts to identify, develop and communicate progressive national security policy solutions.



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